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IS WORK BIBLICAL? PRAISING AND WORSHIPPING IN GOD'S PRESENCE SERIES "The Power of Zion in Exchange and the Prophetic"

Is work biblical? During a recent study that I was conducting, I discovered that God called people into ministry while they were working. Elisha was plowing oxen, Peter was fishing and Matthew was collecting taxes. These are just a few of the examples in the Bible. Adam and Eve were instructed to tend the garden in which they were placed. Why is work such a high priority in the Word of God? First, work occupies the mind and keeps it from wandering into places that it shouldn't. An unoccupied mind is an open invitation for the enemy to gain a foothold into our lives. Secondly, work instills a sense of accomplishment. God designed us to feel a certain satisfaction from the fruit of our labors. Thirdly, work instills confidence. To view the fruit of our labors allows us to become confident in ourselves and our abilities. We are people of creativity because our Master is the Creator of all. Fourth, when we work, we are in the will of God and this allows God to accomplish His will in our lives. I do understand that there are people who cannot work and this certainly doesn't apply to them but to the person who can and won't, the Word says that he shall not eat. Laziness is a sin and sin is the opposite of God. Laziness causes envy and jealousy because that person wants things that other people work for but is not willing to work to acquire those things. Laziness causes self pity and expects others to feel sorry for them because of their lack. Laziness expects others to care for them. Laziness condemns and criticizes those who work. The lazy person should never expect the blessings of God to rest on his household. If you want to be used of God, make sure you have a job and that you're doing your best on that job.

Pastor George Ferrington

God's idea and purpose for the Tabernacle of David is explained in Isaiah 61:3 which states, **"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."** The Tabernacle of David promotes the power of Zion in **"EXCHANGE."** Exchange is based on the power of deliverance that God has given His people when they fellowship Him in His presence. It is then that God used His power to promote exchange, **".....beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."**

The word in the Hebrew for **"heaviness"** means failure or defeat. As we use the Key of David by praising and rejoicing before the Lord, we can expect victory instead of defeat and deliverance instead of bondage. When defeat and failure loom on the horizon of our life, we need to learn to sacrifice our feelings and to offer the sacrifice of praise before our Lord. We need to lift our voice in song and worship Him, even if only because He is worthy of our worship and praise. As we do so, we are turning the Key of David in a spiritual lock; we are releasing God's anointing that in turn releases our spirit person to know and partake of God's goodness.

Yes, the Key of David is God's power that promotes **"exchange."** God exchanges beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. None of these can go together, or exist, side by side in the presence of God. So, when you put on the garment of praise before God, He exchanges your heaviness for His joy. This is what I term **"spiritual release,"** and it will bring God in the form of joy and beauty into the believer's life.

There is another power resulting from the Tabernacle of David that I want to discuss and it is called the power of Zion through the Prophetic. When the believer uses the Key of David to enter into God's Presence, the release of the Prophetic Word from God is made available to the believer who is abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. One of the many examples of this in the Bible is found in the story of Chenaniah who was appointed as Master of Song in David's Tabernacle. His responsibility was to lead the music ministry of the Tabernacle. In order for us to understand the importance of the Master of Song, we will need to understand the Hebrew meaning of the phrase. It certainly meant much more than just song leader; the Hebrew word translated **"the Song"** is **"massa,"** and means, **"burden."** It is very interesting that the same word is used in the Old Testament to refer to the **PROPHETIC BURDEN of the prophets of God.** Chenaniah, as the leader of music in the Tabernacle, was also to bear the Prophet's burden.

As the praising and worshipping children of God sang and played musical instruments, the flow of their praise was soon anointed by God's Presence. This anointing caused the Prophetic Word to flow in the midst of the worship of God. The Spirit of Prophecy would come upon the singers, and there would be a release of the Prophetic Word. Another good example of this is found in II Chronicles 20:14-19, when Jahaziel began to prophesy in the middle of the congregation. The Word says, **"Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel, son of Zechariah....V15, He said, Hearken, all Judah, you inhabitants of Jerusalem and you King Jehoshaphat, the Lord says this to you: Be not**

HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is attributed to most southerners across the lower tier of the USA. All the way from Texas to the Carolinas, friendly interrelationships generally prevail. The story is told of a lady who arrived late at the railroad station, and had just gotten her cup of hot coffee when the train pulled

into the station. Torn between drinking the too-hot coffee, and wanting to get on the now slowing train, she was approached by a stranger who had witnessed the entire episode. The stranger offered the lady his cup of coffee saying, "Here, mine is already sauced and blown." This may seem like the ultimate behavior, but to people whose lives are lived in a friendly manner, this was not at all unusual.

When the two men approached Abraham in the incident when they delivered God's message to him, Abraham did not at first know who they were, but something inside told him that these were very important people and he killed the fatted calf to prepare food for them. He treated them like royalty. As it turned out Abraham was right, they did have some very important news for him. We are told in our Bibles to welcome strangers, and treat them hospitably because for all we know they may be angels. On a daily basis, I don't see many situations where I would expect angels to show up. Especially at my door. But then we never know do we? Hospitality may well have begun in America's southland, simply because the south as a whole was far more of a Godly place than the north. This may partly be due to the relative isolation that most southerners lived under. The attendance at church, and church related celebrations was all of the social life that many of the southern planters had. Even inter-family activity had to take place over a long distance in most cases. This lessened with the growth of cities but the congenial manners stayed on. Most of the people of the south today still have that friendly approach to other people. We read many times today of scam artists and outright crooks using the church and the friendly attitude of the congregation to pull crooked investment schemes.

In keeping with the Bible, we should support our churches with our tithes (this money is God's), and the giver will be blessed by his faithfulness. Also our offerings, commensurate with what we have, is a blessing to the giver. But to the high powered TV evangelists, and the super Godly, my feelings are that we should be very careful. Chances are that you are not furthering God's work one iota, but instead are contributing to the multi-millions to maintain lavish homes, fleets of cars, airplanes and large bank accounts in offshore banks. Not only will you NOT be blessed for making this kind of contribution, but you have also lost the funds that you sent off. The heartbreaking, tear-jerking, tearful supplicant is not displaying Godly concern; he is playing on your emotions. Some have several multi-million dollar mansions. Worse still, these ruthless con artists interchange your address with other evangelical organizations, together with the information as to how easy a mark you are. Are you an easy mark? Do you ask questions? Or do you give in the name of the Lord to someone that never shares his booty with the Lord? Don't contribute to every TV preacher that shouts loudly and uses the name of the Lord often. Check him out. On the other hand, those that you feel by God's Spirit are good ground for planting your seed of faith, then I encourage you to do so. If God leads you to do so, and you know it is God, then He will honor your obedience in giving, and He will see to your blessing.

Jesus gave an example of ultimate hospitality in Luke 10:30-37, where He tells the teacher His answer to who is my neighbor? He tells the story of the traveler, a Hebrew, traveling from the city of Jerusalem to Jericho. The traveler was attacked by thugs and left to die after being robbed of all his valuables. A priest came by and, seeing the battered man, passed by on the other side of the road. Next came a Levite, one whose family standing gave him a position of service in the Temple, and he looked but decided that there was too much to do in order to help this man, so he too crossed over to the other side and passed on. Next came a Samaritan. By virtue of his name alone, he was considered an outcast and not to be fraternized with by the Jews. He, however, gave the dying Jew help. He cleansed his wounds with oil, gave him drink and when he had done all that he could there, he put the Jew on his animal and took him to a nearby inn. When he had secured a room for the man, and done all that he could for him, the Samaritan gave to the inn keeper money, and told him to do whatever was needed for the victim and when he came by on his way back from his trip, he would pay the innkeeper whatever cost he had extended to the Jew. Then the Lord asked the teacher who did he think had acted like a neighbor or friend. The teacher obviously agreed that the Samaritan had acted as a neighbor.

What Jesus was pointing out was that hospitality goes much farther than a smile or a handshake or even a kind word. It sometimes means putting ourselves out and investing some real effort to be truly hospitable. If we want a friend, we have to be one. When we have given a helping hand to someone truly in need, it will never be forgotten. Nor will the record of that act ever be taken off the heavenly rolls. Jesus said for us to lay up for ourselves treasures in Heaven, because where our treasures are, there is where our thoughts will be directed. If you have a mason jar full of coins, buried in your yard, you will think of it often, and with a wary eye.

Any genuine hospitality that we show to others will be noted in Heaven and will be in our account with the Lord. There is going to be a rewards judgment in Heaven and all of those things that we have done, good or bad, will be known, and our just rewards will be imposed. Our crowns of gold and precious jewels will be determined by how faithful we have been in following the example of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Let us give our best to those about us who need our understanding and compassion. And our prayers. Our best efforts are as nothing, if we do not have the Lord's blessings in our actions. God bless and keep us every one.

Bro. Vic Clayton

PRAISING AND WORSHIPPING IN GOD'S PRESENCE **An Update on the Good Samaritans of Franklin Parish**

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for the battle is not yours, but God's. V16, **Tomorrow go down to them; behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz; and you will find them at the end of the ravine before the wilderness of Jeruel. V17, You shall not need to fight in this battle; take your position, stand still, and see the deliverance of the Lord [Who is] with you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow do out against them, for the Lord is with you.**" This is a good place to ask the question, "What caused the Prophetic Word to be revealed and spoken? In verse 5 of chapter 20 we are told that the King had gone to God in prayer, **"And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court."** The new court is where believers come into the presence of God, and Jehoshaphat used the "Key of Promise" in that court in order to talk with God Himself. It's like a "direct line" to the top. The Key of Promise was a key given by God to the King to unlock the spiritual gate into His Presence. This Key is mentioned in verse 9 which states, **"If evil comes upon us, the sword of judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You, for Your name [and the symbol of Your presence] is in this house, and cry to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save."** Jehoshaphat closed his petition before God by saying in verse 12, **"O, our God, will You not exercise judgment upon them? For we have no might to stand against this great company that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."** What happened next? The prophetic word came, and in verse 18, the Bible tells us, **"And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshipping Him."** The results were amazing as they rose early the next morning to the King's words recorded in verse 20, **"...Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe and remain steadfast to His prophets, and you shall prosper."** The army arose and then prepared to march into battle by first appointing singers to sing to the Lord, and praise Him. They then proceeded in their use of the Key of David by praising God with their thanks, and especially for His mercy and loving kindness. It was then that they entered into the spiritual court of His Presence as recorded in verse 22, **"And when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushments against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, and they were [self] slaughtered."** The Key of David gave Judah her salvation as the Lord God fought for them and delivered them out of the hands of their enemies. The Prophetic Word had come to pass and God delivered His people from their enemies because they sought Him in fellowship in time of their affliction.

Gene R. Brown, Associate Pastor

This is to inform you of a couple of changes in the operation of the Good Samaritans. First, whereas clothing had been received every other month, now it is received every month. The days and times are still the same: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 A.M. until 12:00 Noon.

Secondly, the families that are eligible for groceries will now be able to receive them every four months instead of every six months. This calls for a slight increase in the amount of groceries each church provides. As you are aware Christian Fellowship, along with one other church, provides corn meal. (Preferably 2 pound bags of self-rising) Please keep this increase in mind when you bring your corn meal.

I pass along to you what Paul told the Philippians when they had supplied for his needs. He said to them in Philippians 4:19, **"But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."** I commend you for your generosity and faithfulness and commend our very own "Miss Lillie" for the excellent job she is doing as director.

Your Good Samaritan Representative
Byrdie Mae Jennings

THE BASES ARE LOADED

Bob and the Lord stood by to observe a baseball game. The Lord's team was playing satan's team. The Lord's team was at bat, the score was tied zero to zero, and it was the bottom of the ninth inning with two outs. They continued to watch as a batter stepped up to the plate whose name was Love. Love swung at the first pitch and hit a single, because Love never fails. The next batter was named Faith, who also got a single because Faith works with Love. The next batter up was named Godly Wisdom. Satan wound up and threw the first pitch. Godly wisdom looked it over and let it pass. Ball one! Three more pitches and Godly Wisdom walked, because Godly Wisdom never swings at what satan throws. The bases are now loaded. The Lord then turns to Bob and tells him that He is going to bring in His star player. Up to bat stepped Grace. Bob said, "He sure doesn't look like much!" Satan's whole team relaxed when they saw Grace. Thinking he had won the game, satan wound up and fired his first pitch. To the shock of everyone, **GRACE HIT THE BALL HARDER THAN ANYONE HAD EVER SEEN.** But satan was not worried; his center fielder let very few get by. He went up for the ball, but it went right through his glove, hit him on the head and sent him crashing to the ground. Then it continued over the fence for a home run! The Lord's team won.

The Lord then asked Bob if he knew why Love, Faith and Godly Wisdom could get on base, but could not win the game. Bob answered that he did not know why. The Lord explained, "If your love, faith and wisdom had won the game, you would think you had done it by your-self. Love, Faith and Wisdom will get you on base, but only MY Grace can get you home. MY Grace is the only thing satan cannot steal."

May God go before you today and show you His Grace in everything you do. Author Unknown

